element surface defines a second plane, wherein the force sensing element is supported by the housing such that the lower element surface is within the well and such that the first and second planes are coplanar.

31. (Amended) The sensor package of claim 30 wherein the force sensing element has a thickness between the upper element surface and the lower element surface, wherein the housing includes a shelf, wherein the shelf supports the force sensing element within the well, and wherein the shelf has a depth with respect to the thickness of the force sensing element such that the upper element surface and the upper housing surface are coplanar.

32. (Amended) The sensor package of claim 30 wherein the force sensing element has a thickness between the upper element surface and the lower element surface, wherein the housing includes a shelf, wherein the shelf supports the force sensing element within the well, and wherein the shelf has a depth substantially matching the thickness of the force sensing element.

33. (Amended) The sensor package of claim 32 wherein the housing has a connection pad within the well, wherein the force sensing element has a connection pad, and wherein the connection pads of the housing and the force sensing element are electrically coupled when the force sensing element is supported by the shelf of the housing.

34. (Amended) The sensor package of claim 33 wherein a conductive adhesive electrically couples the connection pads of the housing and the force sensing element.

35. (Amended) The sensor package of claim 34 further comprising a membrane covering the upper surfaces of the housing and the force sensing element in order to provide electrical isolation of the sensor package.

36. (Amended) The sensor package of claim 34 further comprising a membrane covering the upper surfaces of the housing and the force sensing element in order to provide environmental protection for the sensor package.

38. (Amended) The sensor package of claim 34 wherein the shelf is arranged to prevent the conductive adhesive from migrating around an edge of the force sensing element and causing the force sensing element to electrically short.

39. (Amended) The sensor package of claim 30 wherein the housing has a connection pad, wherein the force sensing element has a connection pad, and wherein the connection pads of the housing and the force sensing element are electrically coupled.

40. (Amended) The sensor package of claim 39 wherein a conductive adhesive electrically couples the connection pads of the housing and the force sensing element.

41. (Amended) The sensor package of claim 40 further comprising a membrane covering the upper surfaces of the housing and the force sensing element in order to provide electrical isolation of the sensor package.

42. (Amended) The sensor package of claim 40 further comprising a membrane covering the upper surfaces of the housing and the force sensing element in order to provide environmental protection for the sensor package.

44. (Amended) The sensor package of claim 30 further comprising a membrane covering the upper surfaces of the housing and the force sensing element in order to provide electrical isolation of the sensor package.

45. (Amended) The sensor package of claim 30 further comprising a membrane covering the upper surfaces of the housing and the force sensing element in order to provide environmental protection for the sensor package.

46. (Amended) A sensor package comprising:

a housing having an upper housing surface, a well extending into the housing through the upper housing surface, and a shelf; and,

a force sensing element having an upper element surface, wherein the force sensing element is supported by the shelf of the housing such that the force sensing element extends into the well, such that the upper housing surface and the upper element surface are

coplanar, and such that the upper element surface and the upper housing surface face outwardly from the housing.

47. (Amended) The sensor package of claim 46 wherein the housing has a connection pad within the well, wherein the force sensing element has a connection pad, and wherein the connection pads of the housing and the force sensing element are electrically coupled together.

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48. (Amended) The sensor package of claim 47 wherein a conductive adhesive electrically couples the connection pads of the housing and the force sensing element.

49. (Amended) The sensor package of claim 48 wherein the shelf is arranged to prevent the conductive adhesive from migrating around an edge of the force sensing element and causing the force sensing element to electrically short.